

# City of Chandler



## VITA

### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

## Resident FAQ

#### What is VITA?

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is a volunteer driven program that provides free tax preparation and asset development services to low and moderate income taxpayers, the elderly and those with disabilities. Chandler's VITA sites are located at the First Credit Union (25 S. Arizona Place) and Community Services of Arizona (650 N. Arizona Ave.) VITA's tax season operates from annually from February 1 - April 10 in Chandler.

#### Am I eligible for VITA?

The VITA program is aimed at people who cannot afford to pay for tax preparation assistance. VITA is targeted at families annually making \$55,000 or less, and individuals making \$35,000 or less per year. If you have suffered jobs loss or other financial hardships however, the program is flexible and may be able accommodate you.

#### What types of returns does VITA prepare?

VITA volunteers can prepare most basic federal and state returns utilizing the 1040 and 1040EZ forms. They can also prepare the related schedules, such as A, B & C-EZ.

#### What do I need to bring?

The required documentation can vary, [click here](#) for a complete list.

#### Where are the VITA sites?

The City of Chandler operates two VITA sites. The First Credit Union site, 25 S. Arizona Pl., is located just off Arizona Ave, south of Chandler Blvd. The Community Services of Arizona site, 650 N. Arizona Ave., is located in a shopping center on the north-west corner of Arizona Ave and Galveston. The AARP also operates a VITA site at the Chandler Community Center, 125 E. Commonwealth Ave.

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## **What are VITA's hours of operation and do I need an appointment?**

### **Community Services of Arizona**

650 N. Arizona Ave  
(480) 963-6276  
Mon - Fri: 8 AM - 5 PM by Appointment  
Tuesday and Thursday: 5 PM - 8 PM Walk-in  
Saturday: 10 AM - 2 PM Walk-in

### **First Credit Union**

25 S. Arizona Pl.  
Friday: 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM by Appointment  
(Appointments must be scheduled in person during walk-in hours)  
Monday and Wednesday: 5 PM - 8 PM Walk-in  
Free banking services available!

### **AARP – Chandler Community Center**

125 E. Commonwealth Ave.  
Monday: 5 PM – 9 PM Walk-in  
Tuesday – Thursday: 9 AM – 1 PM Walk-in

## **Are volunteers qualified to do my taxes?**

Yes. Many of VITA's volunteers have careers in accounting and taxes. In addition, new volunteers go through an intensive, 20 hour IRS developed training program specifically for VITA volunteers. Finally, every volunteer must pass an IRS certification test; no one is allowed to prepare taxes until the Site Coordinator has their certification on file.

## **Is my tax information safe?**

Yes. The IRS maintains strict rules about privacy and security. Each site must have the ability to lock up all physical tax information. In addition, the sites use secured computers and only the IRS and limited personnel can access tax information once it has been prepared and submitted. The IRS will provide the City information such as the total amount refunded by the VITA site, or the total number of returns processed by the site, but no personal or individually identifiable information is ever released through the VITA program.

## **What is the Earned Income Tax Credit and why does VITA stress this credit?**

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Program, the largest federal tax benefit program, provides more than \$43 billion to low and middle income working families and individuals. The EITC can be worth as much as \$5,657 per family. Unfortunately, up to 25% of those eligible are not aware of the program and millions of dollars remain unclaimed by families and individuals that need the money. Making sure VITA includes the EITC is one of the most effective ways to help families increase their income and get the full refund they are entitled to.

## **How long will it take to prepare and submit my taxes?**

VITA averages about an hour per return. However, the time required will vary depending upon the complexity of the return.

## **Can I use direct deposit through VITA?**

Yes, VITA sites can do direct deposit. Direct deposit tends to be significantly faster than a mailed check, often within as little as eight days after filing. Refund Timeline. (Link) If you do not have a savings or checking account, the VITA site at the First Credit Union will give you a free account when you file that you can use to get your refund direct deposited.

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## **Can I file electronically through VITA?**

Yes, VITA sites primarily use electronic filing. If you need a paper return the sites can do that as well.

## **How long does it take to get my refund through VITA?**

A number of factors affect how quickly refunds are processed and deposited, but often refunds can be processed in just over a week. A refund timeline is available on the City website, <http://www.chandleraz.gov/vita>.

## **Who can I ask if I have additional questions?**

The City's VITA website, <http://www.chandleraz.gov/VITA>, has additional information about the VITA program. For any other questions or issues please call the City of Chandler's Neighborhood Resources Department at (480) 782-4320, or email [flor.lara@chandleraz.gov](mailto:flor.lara@chandleraz.gov).



If you have any questions about this FAQ or the City of Chandler's VITA program, please visit the City's VITA website at <http://chandleraz.gov/vita> or call Neighborhood Resources, (480) 782-4320, or email [flor.lara@chandleraz.gov](mailto:flor.lara@chandleraz.gov).